

NEWS BULLETIN

LUTHERAN WORLD CONVENTION

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news
articles

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Ex-President Herbert Hoover sees Famine ahead for World.

Mr. Herbert Hoover, only living ex-President of the U.S.A., is now flying around the world on a fact-finding mission, particularly in relation to the food situation. He is heading the delegation known as the "Famine Control Committee" which was appointed by President Truman. The party arrived in Geneva, Switzerland, on Monday, March 25th, coming from Rome, where Mr. Hoover had an audience with the Pope. The party left Geneva for Paris, after which they were to visit the chief centers of Europe and then to proceed to the countries of Asia and around the world.

While the party was in Geneva, it was my privilege to spend several hours with them, and I was a guest of Mr. Hoover at luncheon, where I discussed with him the following telegram, to which he gave his approval and which was despatched to the Lutheran News Bureau : -

"Michelfelder lunched guest Hoover interviewed relationship Hoovers Committee Material Aid American Churches stop My conclusion churches America must lead demonstrating willingness cooperate in self-denial of essential foods in order save starving millions Europe Asia stop Every pound food saved now contributes saving human life somewhere in world; saving human life also important demonstration Christian faith stop Propose every church hold special service with sermon on Christ's words "If any man would come after me, let him deny self ...". Famine emergency committee, with President Hoover honorary chairman, should get first and full cooperation from churches in spirit of Lent, endorsing committee's plan voluntary food conservation stop Material Aid Division World Council Churches pledges full cooperation furnishing facts of need to committee and churches stop Americans must not be misled by superficial reports casual visitors who may splurge on blackmarket food stop Situation lower income groups Europe desperate stop They have meagerly survived hitherto by flow supplies from overseas stop When American supplies fail unparalleled disaster certain stop Convinced disaster prevented only by reducing consumption voluntarily to share with needy stop Remonstrate then demonstrate."

Mr. Hoover believes that American people must give up 2 out of every 5 slices of bread, and 1 out of every 3 ounces of fat, voluntarily, from every meal, so that enough food can be spared to feed the hungry world. He also believes that the American people will give up food voluntarily if they can be made aware of the great need for sacrifice. He did not believe that it would be necessary to use legislative measures to get the extra food needed from America.

Reconstruction Secretaries from 13 Countries Meet.

From March 28th to April 1st secretaries of Reconstruction Committees in 13 countries met in consultation with the members of the Reconstruction Department of the World Council of Churches in Geneva. Dr. Alphonse Koechlin, Chairman of the Reconstruction Committee, presided at all the meetings. Dr. Visser 't Hooft gave the opening address on "Reconstruction in the setting of the Ecumenical Task".

Highlights from Opening Speech. - "Now we can demonstrate Ecumenical pastoral relationship. - It is the policy of the Reconstruction Department to knock at the door of every country to gain entrance to help. - The greatest danger of the Ecumenical movement is relativeness. - We must have strong preoccupation with Truth. - There must be a confessional element in the church life and work, but there is also a ghost of confessionalism, which is merely holding on to tradition. As such it is a sign of fear. With this kind of confessionalism you get all the troubles of politics which fight for position and power. - We are rediscovering the Church's responsibility to the world. - The Lordship of Christ must be proclaimed. - In the trying years of the war, churches have often withstood while other agencies and institutions were falling. - The Church must live in a more public way in the future. - Even the Pagan world is turning to the Church, not ready to go to church as yet, but taking the Church into consideration. - In the New Testament, the word of healing and salvation is always associated with the act of healing and salvation. - Material Aid is not an excursion, but an inevitable part of our work. We dare not leave it to impersonal agencies which do not think in human terms. The Church comes to help the Brother for whom Christ died. - A new beginning can now be made. - Reactions are already beginning to set in, in some places. Some say "We had it much easier before the war. We didn't have to work so hard nor give so much money...". Reconstruction is not merely the restoration of the "status quo", or the replacing of what was there before, but it prepares for the future."

Comment by Dr. J. Hutchison Cockburn. - "Go back to the Fathers of the Confessional Groups, and you will find that they broke away from the Church organisation but not from the Church universal. The Church from which they broke had broken away from the unity of the Church."

Excerpts from Address by Dr. J. Hutchison Cockburn. - The principles of ecumenical reconstruction work are to be found in the nature of the Universal Church, in the truth that when one member suffers, all the others suffer with it and injury is done to the body itself. Ecumenical giving is inspired therefore by the determination that all who can should help all who need, and the experience of the Church is that those churches help themselves most to a new life and vigour which have vision enough and courage enough to help others. - The reconstruction work which is now undertaken by the World Council of

Churches lays down the following lines of procedure: In each country of Europe, as it is liberated from the trammels of war, the Department asks that a Reconstruction Committee of all the Churches be set up. To this Committee we expect to be invited by the recognized leaders officially appointed representatives of Churches that are within the fellowship of the World Council, whether these churches be large or small, National or Free, Lutheran, Reformed, Orthodox, Evangelical, Baptist, Methodist, Congregationalist, or other. - The functions of these national reconstruction committees consist in mutual consultation and discussion of the needs of all the churches in the country; the drawing up of plans for the reviving of Church life and activity, of evangelistic effort, of schemes for the training of leadership, and of the growth of work among young people of all ages, and for the provision of Bibles, catechisms, hymn-books, and theological libraries. Every need of every church is a valid subject for discussion, and when the committees have come to a finding on the needs, these are sent forward to the Department in Geneva, where they are discussed and fitted into the general picture, built up by the needs and the plans of all the churches in the various countries of Europe. They are then passed on, with comments, and with some indication of the money required to meet them and of the ways by which they can be met, to parallel inter-Church reconstruction committees in those countries whose churches are able to give in answer to the needs presented to them. In the giving countries, the inter-Church reconstruction committees gather money from the denominations, spread information among the various churches, and seek directly or indirectly, - that is, either through Geneva or by direct dealing, - to help in the various projects under review.

The arrangement outlined above is meant to do away with the custom of past days, when churches made direct appeals wherever they thought they were likely to be answered. It also involves this: that churches represented in the national reconstruction committees should not make direct appeals to the committees in the giving countries, but should send all appeals to Geneva for distribution to America, Britain, Switzerland, Sweden, the British Dominions, and elsewhere. The Department of Reconstruction alone is able, because of its knowledge of all the problems and of what has already been asked from and given by the giving committees, to allocate reasonably and with full understanding the very large sums that are being asked for the churches in Europe.

Lines upon which reconstruction committees have not yet risen to the height of their privileges and responsibilities : -

Receiving Churches :

- 1) The official representatives of the various denominations should keep their colleagues closely informed of everything that is going on in their own church, and should report to the committee all the gifts which they receive directly from their sister churches, whether these are continuations of pre-war donations, or whether they are new and additional gifts.
- 2) The experience of war, and the consequent growth of irreligion in every country, makes it imperative that in the reconstruction committees the various churches should make common plans and not have

separate plans for each denomination. There are, of course, some objects in which the churches have separate interests, such as their need of wooden churches, their need of increased salaries, where the conditions vary from church to church ... They should use their meetings for taking counsel together on the needs of their country, and how best the churches can work together.

3) It would greatly help us if reconstruction committees would not only validate projects but would indicate to us the priority which these projects have in their minds.

4) Committees of receiving countries will please note that they should not send us letters received about any project, without giving us their decision on the matter.

5) In at least one receiving committee a very serious problem has arisen in regard to material aid. Several churches in that country are appealing to their sister denominations in America, and in some cases are receiving large supplies of goods and funds, and these supplies they are distributing only to their own people. At the same time the largest church in the country distributes any supplies which come to it, not among its own people only, but among all the churches; indeed, it hands over its supplies to the reconstruction committee for distribution to all.

Receiving Countries :

1) If we are to see the whole need, and not only a little bit of it, we ought to be informed by the denominations of the sums and goods which are being passed directly from church to church. - There should be set aside by every denomination a considerable percentage of their total generosity, to be expended outside of denominational interests by the Department in Geneva, according to the urgent needs presented to us.

2) It has to be recognized by some of the denominations in the giving countries that their sister denominations in the receiving countries are very small, and that therefore a large contribution from the large denomination is quite out of focus when presented to the small sister denomination in Europe.

When a project is validated in Geneva on the strength of the report of the national committee and is then sent to a giving country, the committee of the giving country has on occasion inquired from the receiving church whether this request is acceptable. This is surely a waste of time; and it shows a lack of confidence in the careful work of the Department in Geneva. I hope that if there is any doubt in the mind of a committee which is asked to provide anything for a receiving country, that doubt will be expressed to us in Geneva, and not to the church or committee which is to benefit by the proposed gift.

Lutherans in Many Lands.

(Excerpts from reports received by the World Council of Churches.)

Austria. - The division of Austria into an Eastern and a Western Zone makes an accurate report impossible. - Ten Theology students - three of whom are Orthodox guests - are registered at the University of Vienna. - An exchange of pastors is welcome, provided they speak German and are true to Biblical and Reformation Theology. The Theological Faculty in Vienna is part of the University of Vienna. It will continue to be supported by the Austrian State. - Guest professors are needed.

8 Austrian churches completely destroyed, 5 badly damaged, 6 parsonages destroyed or badly damaged. - Those hardest hit are in Burgenland and Lower Austria. The Evangelical School on the Karlsplatz, in Vienna, has been completely burned out. The churches and halls in Wiener-Neustadt in Lower Austria, Wien-Floridsdorf, Wien-Semmering, Wien Schwechat, and Zeltweg in Steiermark are completely destroyed. The Swiss have provided 1 wooden barracks church - 4 more are needed. - Also need for new barracks for refugees at railway stations. - Need cars, motor-cycles, bicycles. Practically all in use before are lost or stolen. - Need typewriters, duplicators, Communion ware, robes, rucksacks. - There is a great deficiency of literature for religious instruction, and devotional books. Bibles and hymnals needed. Protestant Austria has no publishing house.

Inner Mission Work: The Nazis requisitioned children's Homes and other institutions. Large sums needed for refurnishing. Children's health has been greatly impaired. Food and clothing urgently needed. Youth work hampered because it was dissolved in 1938 by the State, taken over by "Hitler Youth". There were 100 Parish schools. The worst loss in the educational program was the burning of the Karlsplatz School and Church in Vienna the last evening before the Russians marched in, on April 9th, 1945. This institution needs to be rebuilt in order to restore the life of the Church. - Greatest material relief needs are blankets, clothes, linen, and shoes, and food and medicaments. Officially estimated average person gets 900 calories per day. Old people and children suffer most. Pastor Traar and his Parish Youth Council are ready to assist in distribution of material aid. Refugee pastors are in dire need. Urged to return to their own countries by the Russians, they were invariably stopped at the frontier; likewise they were stopped at the German frontier. Now stranded. - The Austrian Church now numbers 300,000 members.

Pastor George Traar,
Secretary, Reconstruction Committee.

Belgium. - 99 % Roman Catholic, 1 % Protestant. Both have same privileges of liberty. State now pays for religious instruction for both Roman Catholics and Protestants. There is a revival of religious zeal amongst the 100,000 Protestants, of whom there are 4 bodies, united in the Federation of Churches. There are 16 other denominations.

Pastor Van Griethuysen,
Representative of Reconstruction
Committee.

Czechoslovakia. - Lutheran Church.

In Memory of Lutheran Pastors who Died
as Martyrs

- + The Right Reverend Jan Bakoss, Senior
of Slovak Lutheran Church in Banska
Bystrica - Treacherously shot.
- + The Reverend Josef Bucko - Died in
Concentration Camp in Ebensee.
- + The Reverend Michal Madera - Died in
prison of maltreatment after 6 weeks'
internment.
- + The Reverend Alexander Simoree - Died
of privations suffered by him in Re-
sistance Movement in France.

8 Slovak Lutheran ministers were imprisoned in German concentration camps and returned to Slovakia.

24 Slovak Lutheran ministers were imprisoned at home. Both Bishop Osusky and Bishop Cobrda were imprisoned.

51 were interrogated by Gestapo and Hlinka guards.

32 ministers had to go underground because their imprisonment was imminent.

Mrs. Elena Lisonova, a Pastor's wife, was shot as a partisan leader.

2 Pastor's sons were killed in the Slovak uprising against the Germans.

1 son of a Senior was in a German concentration camp.

4 Pastor's sons were imprisoned at home and 11 others interrogated by the Gestapo.

Slovak Lutheran ministers lost 8 million Crowns⁽¹⁾ worth of personal property.

2 Martyred ministers' widows receive a monthly pension of 600 Kr.

11 Pastors' widows from territory returned to Slovakia after the war receive no pension.

6 Pastors from the same territory are penniless and receive no pension.

31 Pastors (old pensioners) get a monthly allowance of 500-800 Kr.

13 Pastors of German nationality still serve without salary.

12 German Pastors (pensioners) get no allowance.

Excerpts from report by Professor Hnik. - For the Czech Evangelical Churches the transfer of Germans raises a serious moral issue. They can sanction it on the ground that there is no other solution. Morally, the German exodus from Czechoslovakia is the necessary pre-supposition of the return to normal neighbourly relations with the Reich Germans. The General Assembly of the Czechoslovak Church passed unanimously a resolution, on January 10, 1946, stating clearly the case: "We know that after the crimes which the Germans as a nation have on their conscience, the presence of a German minority with us gives our people a feeling of distrust and hate. The sooner the Germans leave our land, the sooner will it be possible, even in our country, to repair the heaviest moral crime Nazi Germany committed against our nation - namely, that they taught us to hate another nation; our people shall be enabled to regain all the quicker their balanced attitude and be without ill-feeling towards the German nation. While the German minority is present here as a compact unit, our nation cannot after its experiences grant the Germans political rights. But our nation, as we presume, does not wish and cannot want in its midst a national collectivity with no political rights. Our democratic conviction does not allow this. Therefore, the departure of Germans is a solution necessary morally as well as essential politically."

The Slovak Lutheran Church will need 7 million crowns to increase the level of living of 330 ministers and 136 pensioners.

(1) 100 Czech.crowns = \$ 2.- (approx.)

The largest youth group is in the Slovak Lutheran Church: membership 40,000. Three Summer Camps are completely destroyed.

The Slovak Lutheran Church has three orphanages, all considerably damaged. One was directly in the battle-front for two months. One Church Home for young people was completely ruined, and 3 others badly damaged.

The Lutheran Church of Slovakia urgently needs 6 automobiles.

This Church has developed its own Publishing House - "Tranoscius", but it suffered great loss during the war - about 8 million crowns. They need printing and bookbinding machinery.

Rev. Professor F.M. Hnik,
Secretary, Reconstruction
Committee.

Finland. - Today, as the result of two successive and destructive wars within a period of five years, Finland is a poor and unhappy country.

Finland, now a defeated nation, realises today that to nurse bitterness and hostility towards her great neighbour, Soviet Russia, which has happened before, will never lead to normal relations between two neighbouring states. - The nation realises that as a first step the Armistice terms - however hard they may be - must be conscientiously fulfilled. - At the same time Finland is anxious to have good relations with all peace-loving countries.

The greatest difficulties of Finland are perhaps of an economic nature. Finland lost through the Armistice a large part of Karelia and the district of Petsamo in the far North, as well as some other territory. Apart from the agricultural and industrial importance of these regions, nearly half-a-million of the population of Finland - which is not fully four million - had to be evacuated and found new homes. The difficult and complex nature of this vast problem can be understood if we remember that by far the majority of these people are farmers, and that Finland was not yet a self-supporting country, even before the war.

War reparations to Russia, amounting to 300 million dollars, must be paid in goods, part of which Finland has not produced before; therefore new industries must be set up. A Finnish expert, Professor Suviranta, stated recently that 54% of Finland's exports goes to Russia as war reparations. Therefore the country is not able to import even the most necessary things to a sufficient extent.

The buying capacity of the Finnish mark abroad is extremely small, owing to the inflation, which in many ways causes difficulties for the Church, too. The prices of food, such as bread, butter,

milk, etc., are four times higher than before the war, if we take the government controlled prices. But as the rations, especially butter, are too small, people use the blackmarket quite commonly. Blackmarket price of a kilo (i.e. a little over 2 lbs.) of butter easily goes up to one thousand marks, whereas before the war it never rose to fifty marks.

In Finland, as in every belligerent country, the war has had a very bad if not even disastrous effect upon the morals of the people.

How has the war and its consequences affected the churches in Finland? ... the Established Church, the Evangelical-Lutheran Church ... comprises about 96 per cent of the population. The other religious denominations in Finland (which are represented in our Joint Reconstruction Committee, of which the Archbishop of Finland, Dr. Lehtonen, is the Chairman) are the Greek Orthodox Church (with about 79,000 members), the Methodists (1300 active Finnish-speaking members and about the same number of Swedish-speaking members), the Finnish Free Church - corresponding to the Congregational Church (about 5,200 active members), and the Baptists (3,300 Finnish and Swedish-speaking active members taken together).

The war has had a serious effect on the financial position of the Church ... through the war 52 parishes have lost all they had ... The widow of a clergyman who had been the rector of a large parish is entitled to 750 marks per month, which is the highest pension for a minister's widow. What can she do with it? She could buy for herself one egg for each day of the month, and she would not have a penny left for any other purpose.

Most of the churches that ought to be rebuilt are those destroyed by the Germans in North Finland. In the diocese of Oulu there are 10 destroyed churches, 14 parsonages, 3 cantors' houses, 3 lay-workers' houses, 4 parish halls, and 1 funeral chapel. In addition to this, movable property has been destroyed in 4 churches, though the buildings themselves still stand. Sweden is giving in a few weeks' time, - for this diocese, - 5 temporary churches, including the necessary rooms for the pastor.

Religious societies and institutions connected with the Lutheran Church have also, through the war, suffered material losses. ... I would mention here only a few examples. The Finnish Home Mission Society had a wonderful institution in Carelia, including a Bible House, together with a Printing House, Deaconesses Institution, Hospital, Asylums etc. All was lost owing to the cession of that part of Finland to Russia. In December, 1944, this loss was estimated to be over \$850,000. ... Another institution which has had the same fate is the Deaconesses' Training Establishment together with a large and most excellent modern hospital in Viipuri.

Another Society that has suffered serious losses through the war is the Finnish Seamen's Society.

We realise in Finland that the Church must take up a fighting position in order to make a successful counter-attack on the evil forces of today. This is why the careful planning of the youth work is so vital.

One of the most important tasks in the spiritual reconstruction of our people is the bridging of that gulf which has existed far too long between the Church and the industrial laborers. There are now some promising signs.

Life is still difficult in Finland, and we are short of warm clothing and shoes and medicines, as well as certain types of food such as cooking fat, butter, meat etc. Bread rations seem to be sufficient and there is no shortage of potatoes now. We believe that feeding the needy and clothing the naked is a vital part of the work of the Church, especially now. Christ is the Lord of man's whole life, his body as well as his soul.

Sweden has sent us material aid as well as considerable sums of money. Also England has given money - a valuable contribution of 5,000 pounds. A few days before I left for Geneva, the first shipment of over 500 bales of clothing and shoes came from American Lutheran Churches, in addition to the money already received previously.

Rev. Toivo Harjunpää,
Secretary, Reconstruction
Committee.

France. - (In place of the Report on France, we are substituting Pastor Hedenquist's account of the Lutheran churches in France -- see Appendix.)

Germany. - Dr Eugen Gerstenmaier reported meetings of EKID Reconstruction Committee in December 1945 and January 3, 1946. Plans were made to expend about 8 million RM (1) through the parishes in Russian Zone for refugees.

Collections so far had yielded about 15 million RM. 4 millions have already been distributed. The entire amount will be paid in by April 1st, 1946. About 3 million marks are intended for the relief of refugees in Western zones. The Hilfsucht had raised about 24 million RM. by April 1st, 1946.

The Hilfswerk also collected about 500 tons of clothing, linen, and shoes. Most of these were sent to the Eastern Zone.

In January the three leading "Missing Persons Bureaus" met to coordinate their efforts. It is hoped to facilitate the finding of missing persons soon.

The first wooden churches have arrived at Frankfurt, Freiburg, Stuttgart, Nuremberg, and Heilbronn. Five more are on the way. They are the gift of the American Section of the Lutheran World Convention, and were purchased in Switzerland through a committee of the World Council.

There are over one hundred other parishes which need buildings for places of worship. Plans are now prepared to build temporary churches on the spot out of rubble and wood. These will seat about 5 times as many people and cost no more. The barracks churches seat about 200 people.

The most urgent needs for relief work are listed according to the following priority: -

1. Food - Fats and sugar, especially for children; concentrated foods for children, especially dried and condensed milk, cocoa, oatmeal, Biomalt.
2. Clothing - (old and new)
Underclothing and other warm clothing;
Bedding, especially blankets;
Shoes, especially for children.
3. Medicaments.
4. Transport and fuel.

(1) RM. 100 = \$40.-

Gifts

(American Section, Lutheran World Convention)

\$20,000 worth of bandages were distributed by the Hilfswerk to the Evangelical Hospitals in Berlin - gift of American Lutheran Church.

\$20,000 worth of paper was purchased by American Section of L.W.C. in congregations and the Hilfswerk itself, for refugees.

The first shipment of relief supplies from L.W.C.A.S. were medicaments for Frankfurt, Cassel, Göttingen, and Berlin hospitals.

Food supplies and medicines purchased in Switzerland, costing \$100,000, were the gifts of the Missouri Synod and were purchased through the Material Aid Division of the World Council. The shipments consisted of 27,000 cartons of Quaker Oats, flour, dried potatoes, and 90 tons of sugar.

\$25,000 was given to the Prisoner of War Committee for purchase of Bibles and catechisms in 1945.

Negotiations are now in progress for the purchase of \$200,000 worth of food from Sweden. - half from Lutheran World Relief Inc., U.S.A., and half from Lutheran World Relief Inc., Canada.

Dr Eugen Gerstenmaier
Secretary, Nat'l Reconstruction
Committee.

Holland. It must be counted as a wonderful blessing that during this struggle the different Churches came much nearer to each other. Steps were already taken to this end before the war, but the real spirit was then lacking. To a great extent it is due to the cruel heathendom of the Nazis that the Churches had to put aside the differences that kept them apart. The Churches fulfilled their tasks full of devotion. Hungry and feeble children were sent into the country, and in return, much food was brought into the towns, and so many people were saved from starvation. This was done without any discrimination, under the motto: The whole Church for all the people.

The Churches proclaimed that Nazi-ism is in direct opposition to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

You can hardly imagine our delight when, already during the war, help from abroad reached us. I may emphasize what Sweden and Switzerland did for us at that time: they sent food and goods when there was an alarming need. It was in the days that we received only half a loaf of war-bread a week and no butter nor margarine, that suddenly one day there was a whole loaf of beautiful white bread and a packet of lovely margarine for each of us on the table. Thinking of it now brings the tears to my eyes again.

In May 1945, when indeed there was in many big towns no food left, the aeroplanes suddenly came to drop food. The war was then rapidly approaching its end. We had not been mistaken in our friends, and although the lack of speed made us despair many a time, many of us could not master our feelings now that the end had come, and with it, the marvellous rescue from famine by the "Elijah's Ravens". The work of reconstruction had already started.

The Lutheran Church. - Several ministers were put in prison for a short time, but only one died, in the concentration camp of Neuengamme; many members of the Church Council shared his fate. From their 50 communities, 10 suffered serious damage to churches and church belongings. In 5 communities the damage was not so acute. One big church at Rotterdam was wholly destroyed as a result of the air attacks by the Germans. The damage, estimated at the very minimum, amounts to more than half-a-million guilders.(1)

The Lutheran Church manifests a great spirit of sacrifice, a revival in Church life, and a new vocation in a dislocated world.

Dr E. Emmen
Chairman, Nat'l Reconstruction
Committee.

(1) 100 Dutch guilders = \$37.70.

Hungary. - Destroyed churches, parish buildings and parsonages are signs of the great storm which came over the Lutheran churches in Hungary. The auxiliary institutions created by the Church have suffered severely too. The following institutions are especially in need: "The Luther Home for Students" in Budapest, "The Hungarian Evangelic Lutheran Missionary Society" and its popular university, "Hungarian Bethel for Epileptics and the feeble-minded", "The Lutheran League", "The Budapest Orphanage" and its recreation home at Lake Balaton, "The Evangelic Women's Home for Apprentices and Working Girls", "The Evangelic Phoebe Organization" with its Deaconesses Mother House, Nursing Hospital, Boys' and Girls' Orphanage, Popular University, Home for Crippled Girls, Boarding Home for Girls, Recreation Home, Printing Office, and Home for the Aged.

The struggle was hard to secure the resumption of the Service. As there were no motor-cars nor horses left clergymen were seen in their vestments pulling carriages to clear away the rubble of destroyed churches or to fetch material for reconstruction. Thanks to the ceaseless efforts of clergymen and parishioners, there has been much accomplished. Thus, by summer 1945, the temporary roof of the Budapest church was completed. In the meantime clergymen discussed the spiritual reconstruction of their parishes. An election was held for the Montana bishopric with residence in Budapest, and 44 year old Rev. Ludwig Ordass became successor to Bishop Rattay who had resigned after some years of illness on his 80th birthday.

In September 1945 Bishop Ordass held the first post-war clergymen's gospel meeting. Soon after, the clergymen evangelization for the district beyond the Danube took place and in November in Pot for the clergymen of Budapest and its surroundings. There, the decision was taken to hold evangelization in the neglected outskirts of Budapest. So, "the suffering people were invited to the Great Holy Communion in four places of the city". Much interest was shown in evangelization work, which was very helpful to the Church. Invitations were received from 50 congregations which until then had not wished to join in this work. On account of transport difficulties, all of these invitations could not be accepted. So, an "invisible gospel meeting" was organized. The sermons were given in writing and meetings were held in congregations, in bible classes, and in families. 1200 copies were ordered by 200 congregations. The expenses of the evangelization work was covered by the free-will gifts. Publication of evangelic magazines is not yet allowed, due to lack of paper, but contact is kept with the followers by a monthly circular "Lutheran Evangelization".

Youth work has been newly organized and the Lutheran YMCA branch proved again to be a success. In summer 1945 two new parishes

were founded and their clergymen chosen. Luther, whose 400 th anniversary was celebrated in February, is the spiritual center of all ecclesiastic work. His will of 1542 is in possession of the Budapest Church and is to be printed in facsimile, in six languages.

The work of the Lutheran League fighting for the Lutheran Church, its culture and social activities, ceased because of the war and the siege of Budapest. All its property, institutions and parsonages were destroyed. Buildings and furniture of the other Lutheran institutions also were badly damaged by war and looting. Moreover, the whole country and therefore the Lutheran communities and their clergymen and institutions are facing great difficulties due to the economic situation. Factories are destroyed or their machinery dismantled and taken away. So, many kinds of products are missing. Agricultural products and wood could be found in the interior of the country. But means of transport are lacking. In addition, financial inflation has reached such a level that one pair of shoes costs 3 - 4 million Pengö, and so there is not enough money left to buy the few things to be found on sale. Results of money devaluation show themselves, for instance, by the fact that some pastors' families are wrapping their babies in paper and rags. On the other hand if foreign currency were at our disposal, slightly damaged buildings could easily be bought to replace destroyed Church institutions and buildings.

Church reconstruction is hindered in the first place by the following obstacles:

1. There are not enough Hungarian bibles. 90% of the stocks were burnt during the siege.
2. Almost all the window-panes of the Church offices are destroyed.
3. Transport difficulties are insurmountable. Cars and bicycles were stolen, and trains are not running regularly. Sometimes railway traffic stops for weeks. Cars, motorcycles and bicycles are one of the most important needs to enable the reconstruction of the Church and its institutions.
4. Typewriters and hectographs were stolen and new ones are urgently needed. Cameras for documentation purposes, motion picture equipment, and new diapositives for missionary works are asked for also.
5. Paper is lacking for chancellery and printing work. Possession of paper is necessary for the printing of Lutheran magazines and for a new edition of the hymn book. In the country itself paper prices are enormously high. 70 Quintals a year would be sufficient for urgent needs.

6. We will need clerical vestments for 16 pastors to be ordained and for 19 other pastors robbed of all their vestments.
7. In order to decrease inflation, the Church and its institutions in their sphere of activities need money for administrative purposes, for pastors' salaries, for the homeward journey of the missionary from China, etc.

To mitigate the hard physical situation of the congregation members, especially the old and sick, the orphanages and similar institutions, as well as clergymen's families, help is needed by the following means:

1. Trucks to transport feed and wood for charitable institutions. Through lack of food the number of the inmates fell by 60%, but ought to be raised as the number of orphans and helpless people is greater than ever before.
2. Sugar would be of great help, as many have not seen a single piece of sugar for a whole year, and the lack is very dangerous to the health of children and old people. 50 quintals would make possible a first distribution.
3. Babies' outfits, as well as used clothes for men, women and children.
4. For the institutions: food, clothes, shoes, stockings, underwear, bedding, household-linen, crockery, knives, forks, and spoons, furniture, etc.
5. Medicines (including Luminal, Sevenal, Antisacer, Epibrol) and Vitamin products.
6. Money for urgent purchases which can be made in the country itself and for the expenses of the restoration of buildings and furniture.

Dr Laszlo Pap
Nat'l Reconstruction Committee.

Norway. - The Norwegian nation experienced during the war a period which in many respects - in spite of atrocities and sufferings - may be described as a great time. The nation was united and of one mind as never before. We had grave problems to contend with, but the fundamental solution of the problems was as a rule, simple, once the road to be followed had been agreed upon and the executive organs established. During the first months many people were rather puzzled, the enemy had not revealed his real intentions, and we had not found ourselves. However, during the late summer and autumn of 1940 it became obvious to our leading men that there was only one road to be followed: Open war - any collaboration or understanding with Germans or Nazis in any form was impossible, if the soul of the nation was to be saved. - Gradually our fighting engine was built up ... In the beginning we did not dare issue too comprehensive and exacting commands, but we gradually learnt this : If a thing is right, do it, and you will succeed. ... The Supreme Court resigned as early as before Christmas, 1940. We were thus left without the natural defender of justice. And then it was the Church who had to assert the principles of right against wordly power.

After the cessation of the occupation, much had to be altered. The clamouring for individual rights had to become more prominent. The continuous efforts to arrive at a more just distribution of the common wealth must take place under free conditions. The much praised democracy must be again given a chance to function.

Losses of the Church.

General Remarks. - Losses as sustained by the churches and Christian organizations are subject to different classifications. Churches, meeting-houses etc. have to a great extent been destroyed through war operations or systematically destroyed by the Germans (as, for instance, in Finmark). Some buildings were pulled down by the Germans, as they were in the way of fortifications etc. To this should be added, that a great number of remaining buildings have been badly damaged by German use ...

Finmark. - Prior to the war Finmark had 49 churches, 15 vicarages, and 3 church-cabins (comparatively small buildings in outlying districts). Twenty-six churches have been completely destroyed and all the vicarages and church-cabins have been burnt down.

In some places the churches are still standing, as the Germans up to the time of their final evacuation used them as hospitals. Where the church building has been left, it is as a rule the only sign of former habitation, as everything else has been destroyed by fire. As a rule the remaining churches have been very badly damaged.

The "Church boat" ... will no doubt prove a very valuable help to our church work. Length of the boat is 46', with a 42 HP engine. Speed 8 miles per hour. Electric light has been installed, and there is good accommodation for crew and clergyman. The hold will be converted into a small chapel with a door leading to the crew's quarters, so that it may be possible to use same in connection with the chapel. A little altar will be erected against the engine-room wall. This will enable the clergyman to hold small services, perform Holy Communion, Baptism, and Wedding ceremonies. The boat will be served by two clergymen. While one is ashore attending to office work or resting, the other will be travelling.

The "Grand Total" needed for Finmark is about 8.2 million kroner (approximately, 100 Norwegian Crowns = \$20.-)

Other Needs. - The Church of Norway is a State Church, and about 97% of the population belong to same.

Moral Resonstruction.

We are in many ways feeling the aftermath of war. Our people was subject to occupation and Nazi-government being supposed to represent law and order. During the war it was frequently considered an act of patriotism to sabotage the rules and regulations as issued by the authorities. It is not always easy for everybody once more to become a law-abiding citizen.

There is a serious increase in the number of thefts. Drunkenness has also increased in a somewhat alarming manner. Working morale is lower than before the war. The sense of responsibility has decreased. The Church, together with other extensive organizations (Trade Unions, Youth Associations etc.), are taking active steps to secure a moral reconstruction.

We are faced with a serious problem with regard to the former Nazis, who are to be sentenced. It is not the view of the Church that they are to escape punishment, but it must be the duty of the Church, once they have atoned for their guilt, to assist them in regaining their footing in the community. It will be a difficult task, because large parts of the nation are inclined to consider them as traitors, whose crimes are not to be forgotten. The task of caring for the souls of these sore, often misguided and desperate people will indeed be a difficult one. The greatest demands will be made upon our clergy to solve this problem.

Pastor Bonnevie-Svendsen,
Chairman, Reconstruction Committee.

Note: American Section of L.W.C. has recently appropriated \$50,000 for the furnishing of 23 chaples and vicarages in Finmark, and \$6,000 towards the Evangelistic Boat.

Lutherans of the World

	<u>Pre-War</u> <u>Census</u>	<u>1946 estimate</u> <u>(not including)</u> <u>(refugees)</u>	<u>1946 estimate</u> <u>Luth. Refugees</u>
AUSTRIA	248,078		
BALTIC	2,019,099		
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	642,037		
DENMARK	3,200,372		
FINLAND	3,614,625		
FRANCE	300,000		
GERMANY	33,774,754		
HOLLAND	100,000		
HUNGARY	525,515		
JUGOSLAVIA	250,000		
NORWAY	2,745,877		
POLAND	1,000,000		
ROUMANIA	405,668		
RUSSIA	1,000,000		
SWEDEN	6,105,330		
SWITZERLAND	90,094		
OTHER COUNTRIES	527,100		
<u>Total:</u>	<u>56,548,585</u> =====		

To our correspondents: Please check these census figures and give us your revised estimate of the Lutherans in the countries with which you are best acquainted. Also list the estimated number of Lutheran Refugees in third column.